

Hussein Mohamed Aidid, the unelected president of Somalia, knows Americans have bad feelings about his country. If we only knew more about him, he says, we would change our opinions.

'I Am A Product Of The U.S.'

BY BOB REISS

HUSSEIN MOHAMED AIDID, PRESIDENT OF Somalia—puppet, peacemaker or warlord, depending on your viewpoint—was in his villa in Mogadishu at midnight, preparing to announce a peace agreement with his chief enemy. Outside, his soldiers guarded the courtyard with AK-47s and anti-aircraft guns. Recalling his years as a U.S. serviceman, Hussein said proudly, "Once a Marine, always a Marine."

It may be hard to believe, but the man heading Somalia's largest faction in its civil war is a naturalized U.S. citizen, with a wife back in California. While in the Marine Reserves, Hussein served during the Gulf War. He even worked in the engineering department in West Covina, Calif., helping to plan Los Angeles' traffic patterns. Then, in 1996, he became "president" of Somalia after the death of his father, Mohamed Farah Aidid.

It's a story filled with contradictions. Less than a mile from his villa lays wreckage from a 1993 battle during which his father's fighters killed 18 U.S. servicemen, causing President Clinton to speed up our withdrawal from Somalia.

In interviews in Nairobi and Mogadishu recently, the 35-year-old Hussein Mohamed Aidid spoke about what went wrong that day and offered advice for future U.S. humanitarian missions. "I know the way the U.S. looks to Somalia, and the way Somalia looks to the U.S.," he said. "I've lived in both places. I can be the bridge."

Somalia is an arrowhead-shaped nation occupying the Horn of Africa, bordered by Kenya and Ethiopia. Its 10 million citizens belong to six major clans. Colonized at different times by France, Britain and Italy, the Somalis share a culture and language but never had a country until 1960.

The third-oldest son of 14 children, Hussein grew up in Mogadishu and attended a Vatican-run school. A 1969 coup toppled Somalia's short-lived democratic government and replaced it with the Marxist dictator Siad Barre.

"Barre's soldiers came to the house and arrested my father," said Hussein. "I grew up asking where my father was." His father was a lieutenant colonel whom Barre considered a rival. The elder Aidid was released in 1975.

In the flip-flop world of Barre's politics, the dictator made Mohamed Aidid a general in Somalia's war with Ethiopia and later ambassador to India.

"I spent months in the field with my father," said Hussein as we toured his villa, in which hang father-and-son presidential photos beside the Muslim prayer "God Is Great."

It was now 12:30 a.m., and Hussein had to be the only man wearing a shirt and tie in Somalia's capital city. When we left his villa, a full moon shone down on burned-out UN troop carriers, bullet-ravaged buildings, shadowy figures chewing narcotic kat leaves, and packs of wild dogs.

Hussein recalled that between Barre's brutal regime and Somalia losing the war with Ethiopia, various revolutionary movements sprang up. His father agreed to head the fighting-wing of one political faction. "My father asked the family to leave, so he would be free to fight," said Hussein. "I moved to Los Angeles. My brother was there. But my father told me to be ready to come back."

Life in the U.S. was difficult for the 15-year-old Somali. "In America, you learn self-sufficiency," he explained. "You have to take care of yourself. Learn English. Cook. Wash clothes. I worked in a gas station. Finished high school. I sent money home."

Barre was ousted in 1991. By that time, Hussein was serving as a corporal in the Marine Reserves and studying engineering at California State University at Long Beach.

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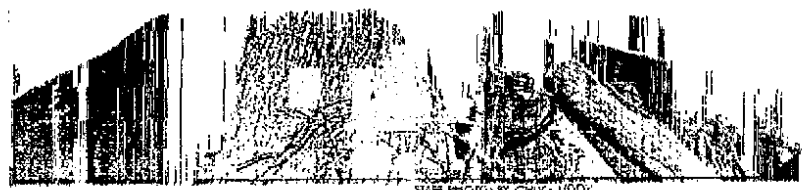
line project is covering a portion of extending parts of Western Boulevard and Buffalo, Litchford, Lead Mine, Jones Franklin and Garner roads.

The chief council debate will be over whether to add more roads and whether to include proposals for housing, transit, storm water drainage improvements or other services in the referendum.

Mayor Tom Feltzer supports attaching bonds for drainage work but not for housing and transit. He has admonished the council to keep the projects modest and avoid a "kitchen sink" referendum loaded with other bond issues.

"We ought to be very cautious," he said. "I hope the public, as well as council members, will exercise some restraint. If a lot of people see a pot of money and want to get their

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STAFF PHOTO BY CHUCK LIDDY

Alarm goes unheard

Authorities are blaming an alarm system at an Oxford sewage plant for a 1.2 million gallon spill of untreated waste over the weekend. The plant is too far from town for anyone to hear the alarm, so officials plan to install a device that will notify the police department of a spill.

North Carolina — Page 3A



Scott VanHorn climbs over a fallen tree as he and fellow wildlife officer Shari Bryant collect fish killed by a sewage spill in Oxford. At left, some of the fish found in Coon Creek, which flows into a tributary of the Tar River.

testify today before a legislative panel investigating the controversial \$100,000 settlement he received earlier this year from the state.

Killens, who headed DMV while Toomer was an employee there, was charged with a misdemeanor count of obstructing justice. Under state law, obstruction of justice can be either a misdemeanor or felony, depending upon the circumstances.

If convicted, Killens could be punished with community service and probation. By contrast, the felony charge carries a penalty of up to six months in prison for first-time offenders.

Wake County District Attorney Colon Willoughby said he asked the grand jury to indict Killens on the lesser charge because he

Killens faces misdemeanor count in Toomer case.

SEE DMV, PAGE 16A

N.C.'s bottom line: Mooning not indecent

Buttocks are not 'private parts'

By THOMAS HACKETT
STAFF WRITER

Moonstruck? Well, there's no redress. Not right now in North Carolina, anyway.

In language not the least bit cheeky, the state Court of Appeals ruled Tuesday that baring one's behind in public may be bad manners, but it's not indecent exposure because state law doesn't consider the buttocks among a person's "private parts."

The buttocks in question belong to Mark Edward Fly, who revealed them to Barbara Glover on the steps to Glover's Mecklenburg County condominium in 1989 before riding off on a bicycle. Fly was convicted of a misdemeanor and appealed.

The appeals court ruled 2 to 1 that "private parts" means the reproductive organs only, and that because there was no evidence that Fly showed his, the case should have been dismissed.

Judge Ralph Walker, dissenting, had a more expansive definition of "private parts."

"I really don't know what message the decision sends," said Karen Eady, Fly's public defender. "It says on the one hand we have a free-for-all, and we can go around mooning anyone in North Carolina that we want to. On the other hand, I don't think the average Joe Blow would base his actions on the decision like that."

Even if he did, Judge K. Edward Greene points out in a dictum to the decision, the conduct still may be considered a disturbance of the peace.

And even with this case, the end may not be in sight. With a split decision, the state attorney general can appeal the ruling to the state Supreme Court.

William Hart, an assistant attorney general, said his office is considering whether it will do just that.

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TODAY

Controlling odor: Farmers chow down after examining the new technology on display at the Animal and Poultry Waste Management Facility at N.C. State.

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Last days for first chef: Bob Passarelli, right, is ending a 15-year run as the governor's chef. He will test products for PYA/Monarch.

Food — Page 1E



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Deaths 1B
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Features 2E
Media 1B
TV 1E
Wednesday ... 1E

Jobs to be lost in Johnston: Johnston County will lose about 190 jobs in the next two to three months when Burlington Industries Inc. closes its yarn-spinning plant in Smithfield. Burlington, with headquarters in Greensboro, is shifting the Smithfield work to Mooresville and Gastonia.

Business — Page 1D



Today:
Humid,
stormy. High
82, low 68.



Thursday:
Variably
cloudy. High
86, low 64.

TOMORROW Page 8B

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B 1

Accord marks labor comeback

Public support, Clinton's actions tip scales in UPS strike

By LEO RENNERT
NEWS & OBSERVER WASHINGTON BUREAU

WASHINGTON — When President Reagan crushed a strike by air traffic controllers in 1981, he signaled corporate America that it had a friend in the White House ready to use the levers of government to trim the power of organized labor.

The ripple effects of Reagan's action were felt in bolder management strategies to weaken union influence. All during the 1980s and into the 1990s, labor leaders were forced to play defense, trying to hold on to past gains as their membership rolls went into a tailspin.

This week, when United Parcel Service settled an expensive 15-day strike essentially on Teamsters' terms, the scales tipped the other way in favor of a resurgent labor movement displaying new muscle with an assist from a more sympathetic administration.

As a turn of the wheel that may send shud-

ders through many corporate boardrooms, the UPS settlement is apt to spell the end of the Reagan legacy in industrial relations.

President Clinton played a critical role in determining the final outcome. He made it possible for the Teamsters to use the full power of the strike weapon when he refused to invoke the Taft-Hartley law and order 185,000 UPS employees back to work.

Still, the president didn't swing as far toward the union side as Reagan did against it. During end-game negotiations over the weekend, Clinton nudged the Teamsters to cash in their winnings at the bargaining table, warning the union that pushing too far risked loss of public goodwill.

The AFL-CIO bristled at this 11th-hour presidential intervention. But it was a not-so-subtle reminder to union leaders that, while

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'Class notes' in a literary class of their own

Alexander Panov, Dartmouth '86, says he's constantly broke and may soon have to resort to, "Fries with that?" Diana Hamlet-King, Yale '75, is getting on with her life "after years of living with (and for long spells, without) a substance-abusing spouse." And Frank Handy, Princeton '26, lives in a retirement community in Winter Park, Fla., where he reports that someone else tells him what he should eat and when he should eat it.

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